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forward to independence as a speedy boon. Canada has no need for, nor is she likely to witness any such sudden change. Our normal development is sufficient for us, whether it take us in the direction of the "New Empire," or whether it achieve the less pretentious, but more necessary work of so reforming our Constitution, that in the Dominion, as a whole, there shall not be a continual suspicion—if not a certainty—that some of the provinces are being practically bribed out of the Dominion Treasury. With men in whom the people have confidence, and she does not despair of securing such men to manage her affairs, the Dominion is doing so well that she proposes to bear the ills she has rather than to fly to others she knows not of. So completely are Jeremiades becoming the fashion with writers on Canadian affairs that Mr. Howland is to be complimented for his courage in daring to appear in print, as one who has faith in Canada and her institutions.

CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS OF CANADA. By WM. HOUSTON, M. A.
Pp. 338. Toronto : Carswell & Co., 1891.

Of Mr. Houston's work proper there is but little to be said. He has collected a number of documents, without a close study of which no one can hope to form an accurate conception of certain features of the Canadian Constitution. And although these documents were well known to every careful student of that Constitution before his publication appeared, yet he has rendered an important service to a large class of readers by making available within this narrow compass, what up to the present, has been scattered through many volumes. He has made it possible for even the casual reader to become acquainted with the foundation stones of the Constitution of Canada, in so far as they can be found in written instruments. For it must always be remembered that written Constitutions are but evidence for Constitutional history and not the history itself.

The book is in many respects modeled after Mr. Poore's now well known collection of Charters and Constitutions of

the States of the Union. In it will be found nearly all the instruments by which the British Government has given, altered or withdrawn its authority for the administration of civil government in any of the Provinces or Districts now constituting the Dominion. Each of these instruments contains more or less minute directions for the administration of civil affairs. Such directions, issued, as they were, at various dates throughout nearly a century and a half, give an official statement of the views of government entertained at the date of each document ; and as a series they manifest the continual growth of constitutional ideas in the British Empire. In this way they reflect important light on English Constitutional history as well as on Canadian. In addition to these, the volume contains the treaties whereby the territories now forming the Canadian Provinces were ceded to Britain, as well as the commercial and boundary treaties with the United States. Mr. Houston has, moreover, written quite elaborate notes on many passages, giving explanations and references to further sources of information. This part of the work gives evidence of wide reading and painstaking investigation ; and the notes are a decided assistance to the reader who has access to a large library.

The book will be especially welcomed by students desiring a legal rather than a political insight into the various positions occupied by the British North American Provinces during the last century and a half. The selection of documents is avowedly arbitrary ; and for that reason it would be ungenerous to suggest that some of those that have been chosen are of little constitutional significance, or on the other hand that others of decided value have been omitted. The compiler in his preface says that he has sought to include only documents of "international or imperial origin" which are of importance to the student of Constitutional history. Under this description one is disappointed at not finding such a document as the Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company. The trading company has played an important part in the establishment of civil government in America, and it would therefore seem desirable

to have included at least one of their charters in such a collection of documents as the present.

One is also disappointed at finding the right of French Canadians to recognition in our constitutional history entirely ignored in a compilation which, otherwise, would be tolerably complete. Here it would be useless to suggest individual documents ; there are many of primary importance. The whole question is whether there should be any documents at all relating to the history of French Canada in such a collection ; whether the colonization and early history of New France has left any important impressions upon Canadian constitutional history. Mr. Houston is clearly of opinion that French influences have not materially affected the later development. He says, in his preface, by way of accounting for the absence of documents relating to the French period that "the true line of development of the Canadian Constitution takes us back not to the French régime in Canada, but to the Colonial Government of what is now the United States."

This seems to be going too far. It is indeed true that French models were not followed in the construction of the articles of the Canadian Confederation. It is also true that the government machinery in each of the Provinces has always been, so far as mere form is concerned, very similar to that which was common among the colonies which have since become the United States, but of which the Canadian Provinces are rather contemporaries than descendants,—a distinction Mr. Houston fails to appreciate. Mere form, however, counts for little in matters political. The history of the forms of government that have followed one another in Canada could be quickly written and would be of little use when it was written. What it is above all desirable to study is the relation of a particular form of government to a particular people. To understand this is far more important than to know many mere forms of government. What would be a good form for a people of British extraction living on this continent in the eighteenth century might be a bad form for a people of French ancestry living here during the same period.

The nature of the people and the state of their political education must be taken into account in estimating the fitness of a form of government for them; and this cannot be done in the Dominion by ignoring the early history of the French in Canada. Two-fifths of our present population are of French origin. One of our provincial governments enacts French laws, and in that Province the civil law and not the common law is the legislator's starting point. The most dangerous problem before Canadian statesmen is the race problem, and Fabian tactics are the only safe process for its solution. The statesman's true task is to induce both nationalities to let the race question alone. In such a state of affairs there can be no information more useful to every Canadian, be he French or be he English, than such as will give him a thorough understanding of what his fellow countryman is politically, and what he has been politically. Confederation is not the whole of the Canadian constitution. There is more political life in each Province as such, than there is in the Dominion as a Dominion. The Provincial entities are far more powerful and far more important in the eyes of the people than is the Dominion. Our constitutional history is the history of Provinces both before and after Confederation, rather than the history of a Dominion of Canada. Why neglect the study of one of these Provinces and that an important one? All Canadians must lament that we are not more thoroughly united; but surely the quickest way to a more thorough union is a more adequate knowledge of each other.

Mr. Houston gives up his introduction to an unqualified advocacy of the "seminary method." He attempts to establish the proposition "that *ex cathedra* lectures are an antiquated and an ineffective method of dealing with any subject in the class-room, and that they are particularly out of place in the academic treatment of history."

No one questions the usefulness of the "seminary method" of teaching. For many parts of the subject of Canadian Constitutional history it is invaluable; but it is only a helpmate to older methods. There is plenty of room for both the *ex*

cathedra lecture and the seminary. It is unfortunate that Mr. Houston should think it necessary to discredit the practice of delivering lectures in order to advocate his own favorite method of teaching. He has done useful work in compiling this book ; but decrying a particular system of teaching, with which he has no sympathy, has no legitimate connection with the collection of constitutional documents. It was well enough to suggest the manner in which he thought the book might be most advantageously used, but it was not necessary to condemn other methods, and the omission of these unnecessary remarks would have secured for the book an even more hearty welcome than has been accorded it.

CANADA AND THE CANADIAN QUESTION. By GOLDWIN SMITH, D.C.L.
Pp. 325. Macmillan & Co., 1891.

If all that has been published recently upon the condition of Canada were collected into a sacred volume, to be made the political guide of benighted Canadians, Mr. Goldwin Smith's contribution would be unanimously accepted as the Book of Lamentations. He is the Jeremiah among those sincerely interested in Canadian affairs. For his profound and varied attainments, for his acknowledged literary ability there is the utmost respect and admiration throughout the Dominion, but that constant dissatisfaction which his writings exhibit, that continual tendency to belittle, to put the worst possible face on everything Canadian, is extremely irritating to the greater part of the reading public of Canada. It very materially lessens his influence, which might otherwise be a power in the country.

His last book is no worse in this respect than much else that he has written. He advocates commercial union with the United States, a measure which most all thinking Canadians believe would be for their country's good. But as usual with what he advocates, most Canadians do not believe that it can be attained at present. It is the belief that the United States would not entertain the proposition, rather than any lack of faith in "commercial union" that keeps the great majority of Canadians from expressing themselves more heartily in its favor.